

FLASH GORDON



Daily Series I, Story 003

"War on Earth"

August 22, 1941 to December 13, 1941

by Austin Briggs



RACING ACROSS INTER-
PLANETARY SPACE WITH
INCREDIBLE FRICTION-
LESS SPEED, FLASH'S
ROCKET LEAVES MONGO
BEHIND ON ITS WAY TO
BATTLE EARTH'S
RUTHLESS
DICTATOR-
CONQUEROR



DAYS PASS, WITH FLASH SKILFULLY GUIDING THE
SPACE-SHIP; ZARKOV WORKING OUT ASTRONOMICAL
NAVIGATION, AND DALE PREPARING
DELICIOUS MEALS, DESPITE ALL
DIFFICULTIES--A BRIEF TIME
OF HAPPINESS BEFORE THE
DANGERS AHEAD

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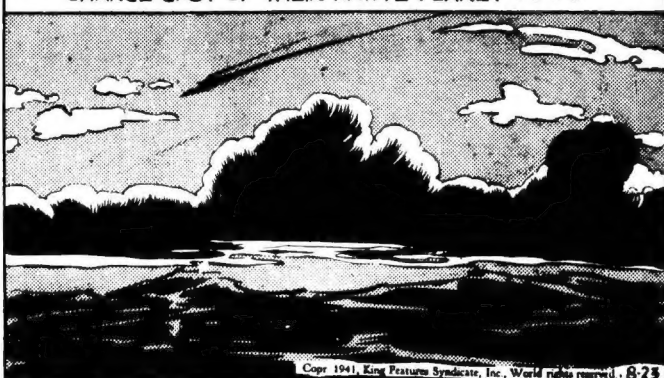
AT LAST, THE
SPACE-SHIP
NEARS THE EARTH
THEY LEFT SO
LONG AGO--



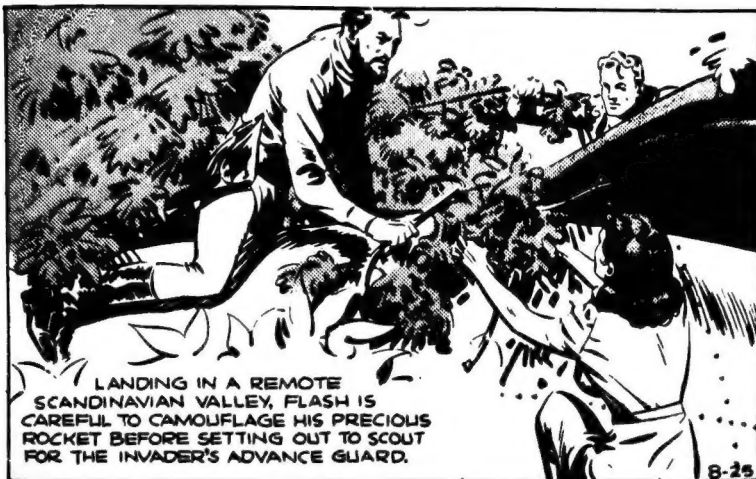
"IF THAT'S THE EARTH, WHY AREN'T WE HEADING
STRAIGHT FOR IT?" DALE ASKS NAIVELY.
FLASH SMILES: "IT'S MOVING PRETTY
FAST, TOO, DEAR-- WE'RE AIMING TO
MEET IT HALF-WAY"



FLASH'S STEERING AND ZARKOV'S CALCULATIONS WORK OUT--AND
THE ROCKET ROARS THROUGH EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE ON SCHEDULE.
FLASH DOES NOT TELL DALE THAT THIS IS THE MOST PERILOUS
MOMENT OF THEIR FLIGHT--THE DIFFICULT LANDING ON SOME
CHANCE SPOT OF THEIR NATIVE PLANET ~~~~



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FLASH, CHAMPION OF LIBERTY AND THE UNDER-DOG, HASTENS TO THE RESCUE OF A TINY BAND OF VILLAGERS HOLDING A MOUNTAIN-PASS ~ LOOK OUT,~ ZARKOV CRIES, "DIVE BOMBERS!"

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HURRYING DALE INTO A MAKESHIFT SHELTER, FLASH PREPARES TO MAKE THE FIRST TEST OF MONGO'S WAR SCIENCE AGAINST THE MECHANIZED MIGHT OF THE NEW WORLD CONQUEROR.

8-27



TWO INVADING BOMBERS DIVE ON THEIR SUPPOSEDLY HELPLESS TARGET. "THE FOOLS --TRYING TO SHOOT US WITH RIFLES! DIVE LOW, SO YOU DON'T WASTE A BOMB," ONE PILOT ORDERS



CAUGHT ON AN EXPOSED MOUNTAIN PATH, FLASH PITS HIS SKILL WITH A RAY-RIFLE AGAINST THE INVADER'S DIVE-BOMBERS.



SCORNFUL OF THE LONE RIFLEMAN BELOW, THE BOMBERS DIVE CLOSE, SO THEIR BOMBS CANNOT MISS...BUT SUDDENLY THE FRONT BOMBER DISINTEGRATES AS FLASH'S RAY EXPLODES ITS BOMB-RACKS!

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THE SECOND BOMBER ZOOMS FRANTICALLY TO ESCAPE THE UNKNOWN DOOM..BUT FLASH RELENTLESSLY FOLLOWS THE INVADER WHO WOULD HAVE BOMBED DALE

DALE IS SHAKEN BY HER FIRST TASTE OF THE EARTH'S RELENTLESS WARFARE. "YOU'D BETTER GO BACK WITH THE REFUGEES, DARLING," FLASH URGES.



BRAVELY SHE DRIES HER TEARS. "MY PLACE IS WITH YOU ALWAYS," SHE SAYS FIRMLY, "AND I WANT TO HELP SAVE THESE PEOPLE FROM THE CRUEL CONQUEROR!"



THE HARD-PRESSED LITTLE BAND OF VIKINGS DEFENDING THEIR HOMELAND WELCOMES FLASH. "WE DIE HERE, SO OUR FAMILIES ESCAPE," SAYS THEIR LEADER, OLAF.

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THE VILLAGERS EAGERLY ACCEPT FLASH'S LEADERSHIP, AS HIS MILITARY SKILL PLACES THEM AT STRATEGIC POINTS IN THE MOUNTAIN-PASS. FLASH TAKES THE ADVANCE POST OF GREATEST DANGER.



8-30

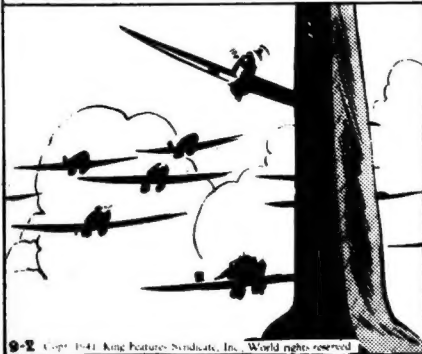


FURIOUS AT THE SLIGHT DELAY IN HIS INVASION TIMETABLE, COLONEL RUVICH ORDERS HIS ADVANCE COLUMN TO STORM THE PASS WITH TANKS AND DIVE-BOMBERS: "WIPE THEM OUT!"

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FLIGHT, AFTER FLIGHT OF DIVE-BOMBERS, TAKES OFF TO SMASH FLASH'S THINLY HELD MOUNTAIN PASS, WHICH IS HOLDING UP THE DICTATOR'S INVASION TIME-TABLE, WHILE A FLEEING NATION GETS A BREATHING SPELL ---



DALE AND THE DEFENDERS CONGRATULATE FLASH ON THE SUCCESS OF HIS RAY-BARRAGE -- BUT HE KNOWS THAT THE ENEMY PLANES CAN FLY HIGHER THAN HIS MAKE-SHIFT RAY-BEAMS, IF THEY TRY.



EVEN THE DICTATOR'S AIR-FORCE DISCIPLINE FAILS, AS THE DIVE-BOMBER FORMATIONS SEE THEIR COMRADES BLOWN UP IN MID-AIR BY AN UNSEEN, UNKNOWN DEFENSE-THE SURVIVING PLANES TURN BACK ---

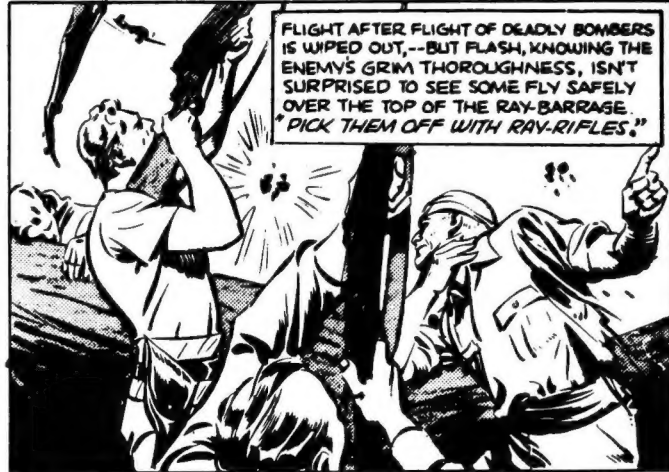


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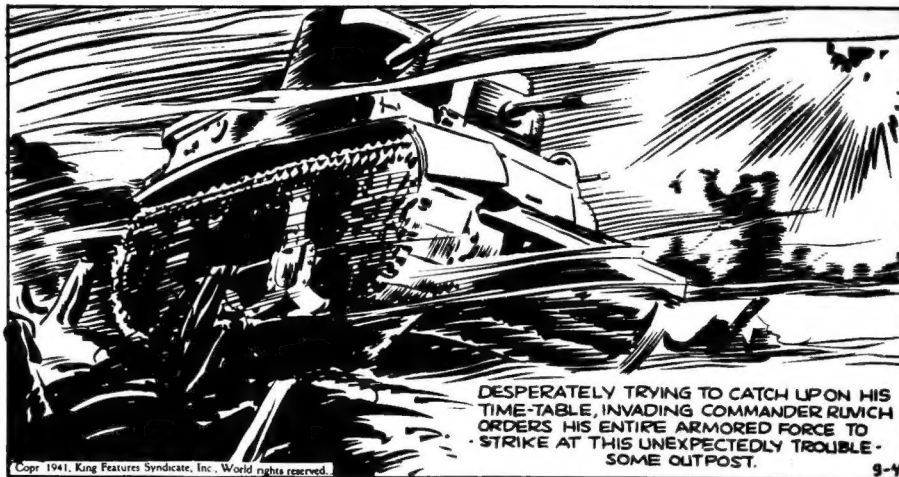


RUTHLESSLY COLONEL RUVICH ORDERS HIS BOMBERS BACK. "FLY AT DIFFERENT HEIGHTS, EVEN UP TO YOUR CEILING--CIRCLE AROUND--GLIDE IN, EVEN IF YOU ALL DIE, THE DICTATOR MUST KNOW ALL ABOUT THIS NEW WEAPON!"

FLIGHT AFTER FLIGHT OF DEADLY BOMBERS IS WIPED OUT,--BUT FLASH, KNOWING THE ENEMY'S GRIM THOROUGHNESS, ISN'T SURPRISED TO SEE SOME FLY SAFELY OVER THE TOP OF THE RAY-BARRAGE. "PICK THEM OFF WITH RAY-RIFLES."



FLASH'S RAY-BARRAGE HAS SHATTERED MOST OF THE ADVANCE AIR-FORCE, BUT ENOUGH DIVE-BOMBERS GET OVER TO MAKE THE DEFENSE POST AN INFERNO. FLASH'S SHARP-SHOOTING PROTECTS DALE ----



DESPERATELY TRYING TO CATCH UP ON HIS TIME-TABLE, INVADING COMMANDER RUVICH ORDERS HIS ENTIRE ARMORED FORCE TO STRIKE AT THIS UNEXPECTEDLY TROUBLE-SOME OUTPOST.

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THE DIVE-BOMBING STOPS THE SHATTERED DEFENDERS SIGH WITH RELIEF -- BUT FLASH, WISE IN THE WAYS OF WARFARE, ORDERS THEM TO THEIR POSTS "THE REAL ATTACK IS JUST STARTING!"



THE RELENTLESS STEAM-ROLLER OF ARMORED FIRE-POWER DRIVES THE PITIFUL LITTLE BAND OF VIKINGS BACK, HOWEVER BRAVELY THEY FIGHT FOR THEIR HOMELAND. THE INVADERS WIN DEEP INTO THE PASS --

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FLASH AND ZARKOV, HIDDEN IN CAVES AT EITHER SIDE OF THE PASS, HOLD THEIR FIRE. "HURRY, IT'LL BE TOO LATE," DALE PLEADS, BUT FLASH SAYS, "WAIT TILL THEY'RE IN THE TRAP."

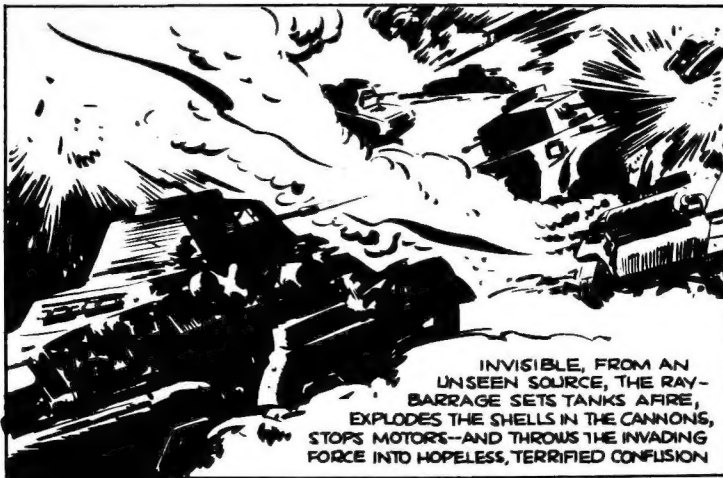


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AT LAST, FLASH'S RAY-RIFLE GIVES THE SIGNAL - HE AND ZARKOV OPEN FIRE FROM THEIR POSTS COMMANDING THE MOUNTAIN PASS -- TWO MEN AND A GIRL AGAINST AN ARMORED COLUMN!



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INVISIBLE, FROM AN UNSEEN SOURCE, THE RAY-BARRAGE SETS TANKS AFIRE, EXPLODES THE SHELLS IN THE CANNONS, STOPS MOTORS--AND THROWS THE INVADING FORCE INTO HOPELESS, TERRIFIED CONFUSION



AT THE SIGHT OF THEIR POWERFUL ENEMY IN WILD, HELPLESS RETREAT, DALE LETS GO. FROM A WAR-HEROINE, SHARING FLASH'S DANGERS, SHE BECOMES A HELPLESS GIRL.



TIRE, BUT VICTORIOUS, THE DEFENDERS REST AND CELEBRATE, TOASTING FLASH, WHO SAVES THEM FROM IMMEDIATE DISASTER.



"WE MUST HOLD THIS PASS, SO THE KING AND QUEEN CAN ESCAPE!" OLAF SAYS, BUT FLASH SEES THE DANGER: "THE INVADER WILL CIRCLE AND CATCH THEM. I'D BETTER GO."



FLASH HAS GUESSED THE CONQUEROR'S STRATEGY. THE BEATEN COLUMN HALTS. THEN SPLITS UP IN A PINCERS MOVEMENT ON SHORT-WAVE ORDER FROM GENERAL KEILICH, HIMSELF: "STRIKE THROUGH THE OTHER PASSES--SURROUND THEM--ABOVE ALL, CAPTURE THE KING!"

9-8

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THE DICTATOR'S RIGHT-HAND MAN, GENERAL KEILICH, PLOTS THE INVASION AT HEAD-QUARTERS: "ALL ON SCHEDULE EXCEPT THIS MOUNTAIN PASS, WHERE A SECRET WEAPON IS REPORTED. WE CAN'T LET THEIR KING ESCAPE-- SEND TEN MORE PLANE SQUADRONS."



BUT FLASH IS ALERT TO THE NEW DANGER. HE AND ZARKOV AND DALE HURRY BACK TO THEIR HIDDEN ROCKET-SHIP...



Zooming into the sky, FLASH SOON OVERTAKES THE FLEEING KING--- WHOSE CAR IS TRAPPED BY A BOMBED MOUNTAIN BRIDGE.

9-9

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LEAVING NOTHING TO CHANCE, THE INVADER'S BOMBER SQUADRONS DESTROY THE MOUNTAIN ROAD ON BOTH SIDES OF THE TRAPPED KING -



THEN PLANES DROP PARACHUTISTS TO CAPTURE THE KING AND BLACK-MAIL HIS COUNTRY INTO SUBMISSION.



-- BUT FLASH'S ROCKET DIVES LIKE AN AVENGING COMET FROM THE SKY -- AND A PARALYZING RAY TURNS THE DOZENS OF PARACHUTISTS INTO SO MANY HELPLESS, UNCONSCIOUS BODIES.

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LIKE A BOLT FROM THE BLUE, FLASH'S ROCKET PARALYZES THE PARACHUTISTS WHO TRIED TO KIDNAP THE KING - LANDING, HE HURRIES UP TO THE AMAZED MONARCH, WHO DEMANDS: "WHO ARE YOU, FRIEND OR FOE?"

9-11

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"I'M A FRIEND OF ANYONE WHO BELIEVES IN FREEDOM, YOUR MAJESTY," FLASH SAYS. "PLEASE GET INTO MY ROCKET QUICKLY--THE ENEMY BOMBERS WILL BE BACK AT ANY MOMENT!"



FLASH HURRIES THE ROYAL PARTY INTO THE ROCKET. ONLY NOBILITY AND PRIDE KEEP THEM FROM SHOWING CONCERN, AS THE AMAZING CRAFT ROARS FROM THE GROUND--JUST AS THE DIVE-BOMBERS SWOOP FIERCELY DOWN--



WITH THE ROYAL FAMILY OF THE INVADED LAND AS HIS PRECIOUS CARGO, FLASH ROCKETS UPWARD TO MEET A DIVE-BOMBING ATTACK



BULLETS AND SMALL SHELLS HAMMER LIKE HAIL AGAINST THE ROCKET'S STEELITE HULL - BUT MONGO'S SCIENCE BUILT WELL - THE MIGHTY CRAFT ZOOMS ON, AND FLASH'S RAY BARRAGE SOON WIPES OUT THE INVADER'S WAR-PLANES

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THE ROCKET ZIPS INTO THE STRATOSPHERE, OUT-DISTANCING ITS OTHER ENEMIES. "WHERE WILL YOUR MAJESTY BE SAFE?" FLASH ASKS - THE KING SAYS SADLY, "NOWHERE, UNTIL MY COUNTRY IS FREED FROM THE INVADER, BUT A WARSHIP IS WAITING FOR ME IN A NORTHERN PORT".....



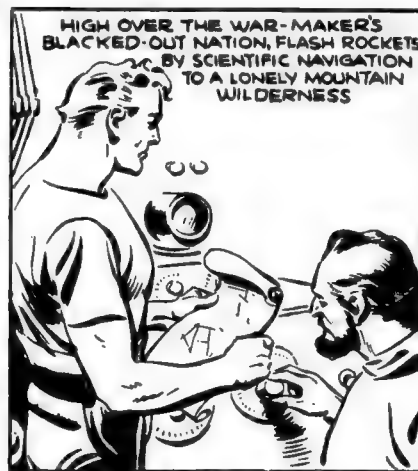
FLASH BRINGS THE REFUGEE KING SAFELY TO HIS WAITING WARSHIP. "MY COUNTRY AND I THANK YOU," HE SAYS.



THE PRINCESS IMPULSIVELY SHOWS HER GRATITUDE: "I CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH, MY HANDSOME RESCUER."



SWIFTLY FLASH TURNS TO HIS GREAT TASK. "A FEW SMALL VICTORIES WILL NEVER SMASH THIS WORLD-CONQUEROR - I'M GOING TO FLY BEHIND HIS LINES AND TRY TO CAPTURE THE DICTATOR, HIMSELF."





FLASH BRAKES HIS ROCKET TO A LANDING ON A REMOTE, LONELY MOUNTAINSIDE IN THE HEART OF THE WARRING DICTATOR'S COUNTRY



QUICKLY, THE LITTLE CREW OF TYRANT-HUNTERS CAMOUFLAGED THEIR ROCKET, BUT KEEP IT POINTED UP, READY FOR A QUICK AND DESPERATE GET-AWAY

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THEIR TASK IS BARELY FINISHED, WHEN FLASH'S KEEN EARS WARN HIM. "SOMEONE COMING--AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE--HIDE."



FLASH'S PLANS FOR A SECRET, UNSEEN LANDING IN HIS ENEMY'S COUNTRY SEEM DOOMED. HIS ROCKET WAS SEEN... AND PEOPLE ARE COMING TO INVESTIGATE.

9-18



THE INTRUDERS TURN OUT TO BE ONLY A PAIR OF LOVERS-- BUT THEY MAY GIVE A FATAL ALARM... "THAT FALLING STAR HIT NEAR HERE, TRINA," SAYS THE MAN, AND THE GIRL ANSWERS, "YES, I MARKED IT BY THAT TREE, PETER."



FLASH'S BAD LUCK CONTINUES WHEN A STONE MOVES UNDERFOOT. "WHAT'S THAT?" CRIES THE NATIVE, PETER-- FLASH ACTS SWIFTLY: "DON'T MOVE OR MAKE A SOUND AND WE WON'T HURT YOU!"

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A PAIR OF LOVERS BLUNDER ONTO FLASH'S DICTATOR-HUNTING EXPEDITION. "WE'RE FRIENDS OF FREEDOM," HE EXPLAINS. "WE'LL LET YOU GO AS SOON AS WE'VE FINISHED OUR MISSION HERE----"

9-19



"IS THIS SOME SECRET POLICE TRICK?" PETER ASKS. TRINA ANSWERS, "IT COULDN'T BE, DEAR. LET'S TELL THEM THE TRUTH--WE HATE THIS WAR, TOO!" FLASH WELCOMES HIS NEW ALLIES--BUT RESOLVES TO WATCH THEM



FLASH TAKES A CHANCE ON THE SINCERE-SEEMING COUPLE AND GOES WITH THEM TO CHARCOAL-BURNER PETER'S HUT, BUT HE IS KEENLY ALERT AGAINST BETRAYAL OR A TRAP.

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FLASH PUMPS THE HONEST-SEEMING COUPLE FOR INFORMATION HE CAN USE IN HIS SECRET SCHEME TO CAPTURE THE DICTATOR----



ON WATCH, OUTSIDE, HIDDEN BEHIND A TREE, ZARKOV DOESN'T KNOW THAT HE HAS YIELDED TO WEARINESS AND STRAIN HE HAS DOXED OFF---

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SUDDENLY A STERN, OFFICIAL KNOCKING AT THE DOOR STARTLES THE TRAPPED INMATES INTO SILENCE--A HARSH VOICE BOOMS: "OPEN UP! WE ARE THE SECRET POLICE!"



THE DICTATOR'S SECRET POLICE HAMMER AT THE DOOR. FLASH HIDES DALE, WARNING PETER, AND TRINA TO ACT INNOCENT!!

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"WHERE ARE THE STRANGERS?" DEMAND THE POLICE--BUT LOYAL PETER AND TRINA INSIST THEY ARE ALONE IN THE HUT.



TRINA GASPS, AS THE POLICEMAN'S GRASP HURTS HER TO SAVE HER, PETER SUDDENLY CRIES: "LET HER GO--THE STRANGERS ARE IN THAT CLOSET!"

9-22



BETRAYED BY THE TERRIFIED NATIVES, FLASH LEAPS FROM HIS HIDING-PLACE, SO THAT SHOTS AIMED AT HIM WON'T ENDANGER DALE--HE SHOOTS IT OUT WITH THE SECRET POLICE--HIS STRANGE RAY-WEAPON SCARES THEM----

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FLEEING FROM FLASH'S BARRAGE, ONE GUARD BLUNDERS INTO DALE. SEIZING HER AS A SHIELD, HE THREATENS FLASH. "DROP YOUR GUN OR I'LL KILL THIS WOMAN!"



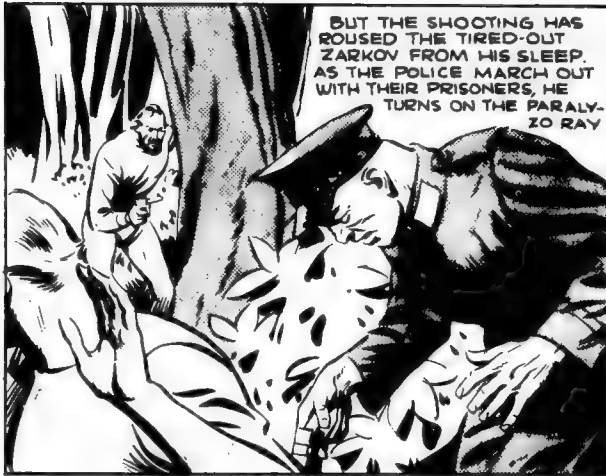
"NO, KEEP ON FIGHTING!" DALE URGES, BUT FLASH WON'T SACRIFICE HER. HE HOLDS OUT HIS GUN IN SURRENDER....

9-23



FLASH'S SECRET DRIVE TO CAPTURE THE WAR-MAKING DICTATOR MEETS DISASTER WHEN THE SECRET POLICE CATCH HIM!

9-24



BUT THE SHOOTING HAS ROUSED THE TIRED-OUT ZARKOV FROM HIS SLEEP. AS THE POLICE MARCH OUT WITH THEIR PRISONERS, HE TURNS ON THE PARALYZO RAY



FLASH LEAPS INTO SPLIT-SECOND ACTION-AND GETS THE DROP ON THE OTHER SECRET POLICE ---

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FLASH AND ZARKOV TURN THE TABLES ON THE SECRET POLICE, CAPTURING THEIR RAIDING PARTY

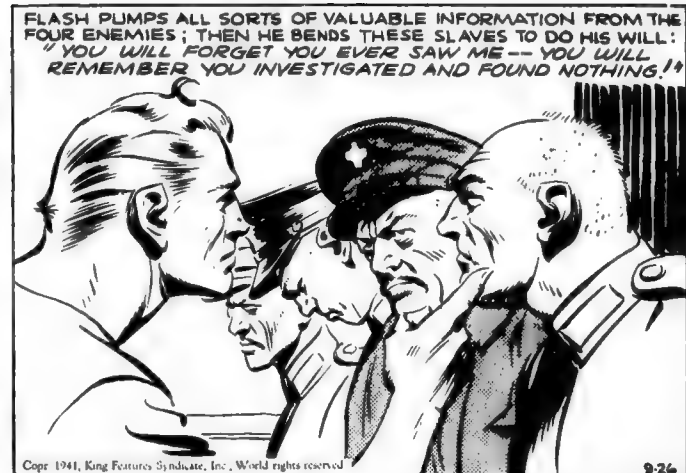
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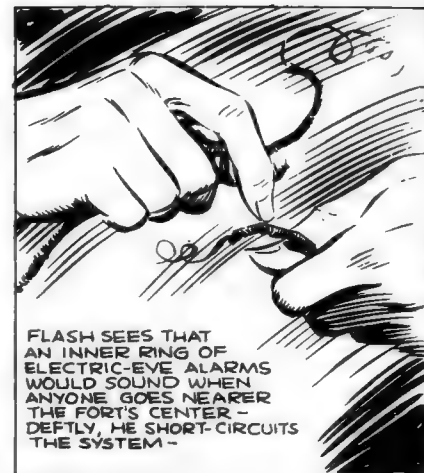
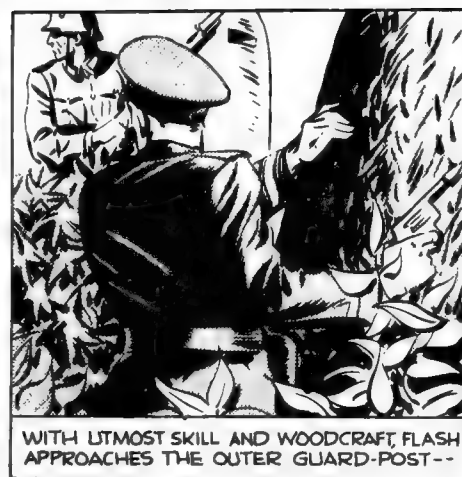


FLASH MAKES A SWIFT TRIP TO HIS HIDDEN ROCKET-SHIP TO GET SOME EQUIPMENT WHICH HIS CAPTIVES WATCH WITH WELL-JUSTIFIED WORRY ---



"NO--I'M NOT GOING TO TORTURE YOU THE WAY YOU WOULD TREAT ME," FLASH SAYS COLDLY, "BUT I'M GOING TO QUESTION YOU --- WITH THE HYPNOSCOPE!"







FLASH LEAVES THE ETHER-GASSED GUARDS TO AWAKEN LATER WITH NO KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY'VE BEEN OUT-WITTED: "ONE STEP NEARER THE DICTATOR--ONE MORE BLOW FOR FREEDOM!"



FLASH STEPS BOLDLY OUT ONTO THE ROAD LEADING TO THE FORTRESS GATES



AN ARMORED CAR ROARS DOWN THE ROAD TOWARD THE DICTATOR'S FORTRESS--RELYING ON THEIR DISGUISE AS SECRET POLICE, FLASH BRAZENLY STEPS OUT TO HALT THE CAR-- ZARKOV AND DALE BACK UP HIS PLAY, THOUGH THEY FEAR DISASTER.

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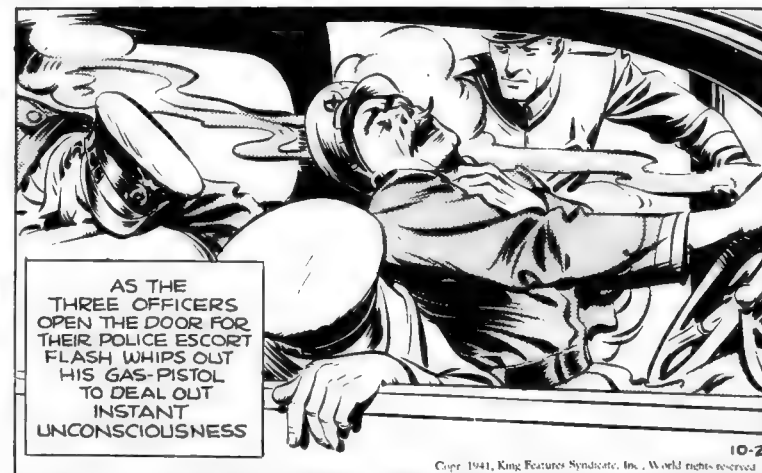
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FLASH PLAYS HIS ROLE OF SECRET POLICE OFFICER TO STOP AN ARMORED CAR BOUND FOR THE DICTATOR'S FORTRESS--HOME: "INSPECTION STATION, SHOW YOUR PASSES!" HE SNAPS



"WE WILL ESCORT YOU TO THE GATES--SPECIAL PARTY ORDERS--THE DICTATOR IS IN DANGER!" FLASH BLUFFS



AS THE THREE OFFICERS OPEN THE DOOR FOR THEIR POLICE ESCORT FLASH WHIPS OUT HIS GAS-PISTOL TO DEAL OUT INSTANT UNCONSCIOUSNESS

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10-2





WITH STOLEN UNIFORMS AND PASSES, FLASH TRIES TO BLUFF HIS WAY INTO THE DICTATOR'S FORTRESS TO CAPTURE THE WAR-MAKER AND END THE WAR.



FLASH BOLDLY SENDS FOR THE COMMANDER OF THE FORTRESS, WHO GROWLS: "I AM COLONEL VORKIN - WHAT IS YOUR MISSION HERE?" HAUGHTILY, FLASH RETORTS: "TO TAKE CHARGE OF GUARDING THE DICTATOR. THERE IS A NEW THREAT AGAINST HIS LIFE!"



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DISGUISED AS A GENERAL, FLASH ORDERS COL. VORKIN TO SHOW HIM THE FORTRESS HEADQUARTERS. "THE SECRET POLICE HAVE LEARNED OF DANGER TO THE DICTATOR - I MUST INSPECT OUR DEFENSES!"

10-7

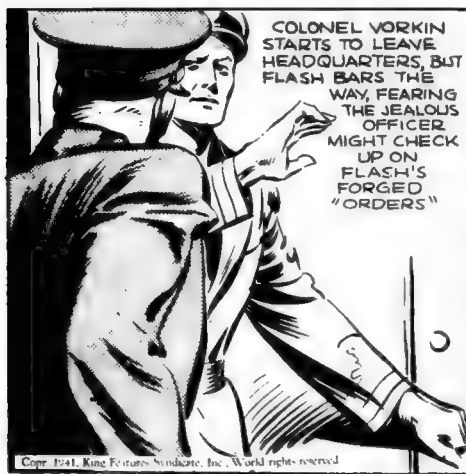


GRUDGINGLY, VORKIN DEMONSTRATES THE SYSTEM OF ELECTRIC WARNINGS WHICH PREVENT ANYONE FROM ENTERING OR LEAVING WITHOUT SPECIAL PERMISSION AT EACH GUARD POST. "EVERY PASSAGEWAY IS GUARDED BY ELECTRIC EYES WHICH OPERATE MACHINE-GUNS"



"YOU SEE, OUR DICTATOR IS PERFECTLY SAFE," SWEARS VORKIN. BUT FLASH SMILES TO HIMSELF, AS HE ANSWERS: "NO, I KNOW HE'S NOT SAFE!"

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BOLDLY FLASH
APPROACHES THE
SUPREME WAR
COUNCIL OF THE
WORLD-CONQUERING
DICTATOR, WHOM HE
MEANS TO CAPTURE.
COL. VORKIN
SUSPICIOUSLY
ACCOMPANIES
HIM.

THE AGGRESSOR NATION'S
LEADERS OF AIR, ARMY AND
NAVY GLANCE IN SURPRISE
AT THE STRANGE "GENERAL" IN
THEIR MIDST, BUT COL VORKIN'S
PRESENCE VOICES FOR
FLASH--THEY ALL KNOW
VORKIN

ALL LEAP TO SALUTE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE
DICTATOR WHO HAS PLUNGED A WORLD INTO WAR -
FLASH STARES STERNLY AT HIS CHOSEN VICTIM ----

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THE DICTATOR SUMMONS HIS WAR
COUNCIL. FLASH KEEPS HIS FACE HIDDEN--
AND STUDIES HIS WATCH FOR THE "ZERO-
HOUR" HE'S ARRANGED WITH ZARKOV

SUDDENLY THE SCREAMING
OF ALARM SIRENS AND A
ROAR OF MACHINE-GUN
FIRE THROWS
THE COUNCIL
INTO
CONFUSION

ONLY FLASH KNOWS
WHAT TO DO, FOR HE
HAD ARRANGED
ALL THIS!

"COME ON, VORKIN, IT'S THAT PLOT! WE MUST PRO-
TECT THE DICTATOR," FLASH SHOUTS, STARTING
TOWARD THE ARCH-ENEMY HE WANTS TO CAPTURE!

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NEXT
WEEK

DISASTER!

10-11

THE ALARM SIRENS AND EXPLOSIONS, WHICH ZARKOV SETS OFF AT FLASH'S ORDERS, THROW THE DICTATOR'S WAR COUNCIL INTO FIERCE CONFUSION. FLASH RACES TOWARD THE STARTLED DICTATOR



"IT'S A PLOT TO KILL YOU," FLASH SHOUTS AT HIS ARCH-ENEMY....
"COL VORKIN AND I WILL SAVE YOU. COME THIS WAY!"



10-13
BUT COL VORKIN, SUSPICIOUS AND RESENTFUL OF THE UNKNOWN "GENERAL"--FLASH IN DISGUISE--SPOILS THE KIDNAP PLOT: "WAIT, MY LEADER, SURELY, YOU ARE SAFE AMONG ALL OF US!"



FLASH'S DARING AND WELL-LAID SCHEME TO KIDNAP THE WORLD-CONQUERING DICTATOR AND END THE NEW WORLD-WAR IS UPSET BY COL VORKIN'S TOO WELL-JUSTIFIED SUSPKIONS---



"QUICK, YOUR EXCELLENCY, THIS ROOM IS GOING TO BE BLOWN UP-- FOLLOW ME THROUGH THE EXIT DOOR!"
FLASH CRIES DESPERATELY BUT THE DICTATOR SAYS SHARPLY: "WHO ARE YOU, GENERAL---?"



GENERAL KEILICH, GRIM AND BRILLIANT COMMANDER OF THE DICTATOR'S ARMIES, LEAPS ONTO THE PLATFORM WITH A ROAR: "THIS MAN IS AN IMPOSTOR--H SPY! GET BACK, YOUR EXCELLENCY!"

WITH SUCCESS ALMOST IN HIS GRASP, FLASH SEES DISASTER OVERTAKE HIS BOLD SCHEME TO CAPTURE THE DICTATOR ... GENERAL KEILICH AND COL. VORKIN PENETRATE HIS DISGUISE. TRAPPED, FLASH FIGHTS LIKE A MAD-MAN--

10-15

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THE DICTATOR IS SURROUNDED BY A GROUP OF LOYAL OFFICERS. FLASH HAS NO CHANCE TO CAPTURE OR KILL HIM--SO WITH A LIGHTNING CHANGE OF PLANS, HE GRABS GENERAL KEILICH AS A SUBSTITUTE---VORKIN SHOTS--AND PAYS THE PENALTY OF HIS DARING.



THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE DICTATOR'S WORLD-CONQUERING ARMIES, GENERAL KEILICH, HAS WRECKED FLASH'S PLAN TO CAPTURE THE DICTATOR--BUT HIS WELL-DESERVED REWARD IS TO BECOME FLASH'S PRISONER INSTEAD!

FLASH SUBDUES HIS TOO-TRoublesome CAPTIVE WITH ONE WELL-PLACED BLOW....



10-16

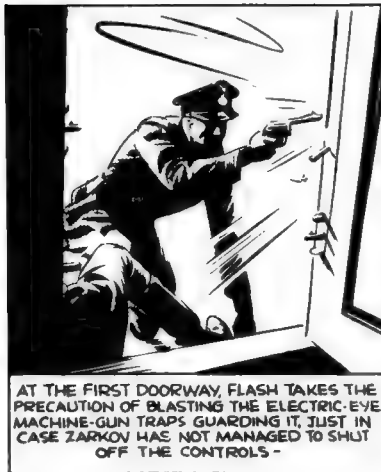
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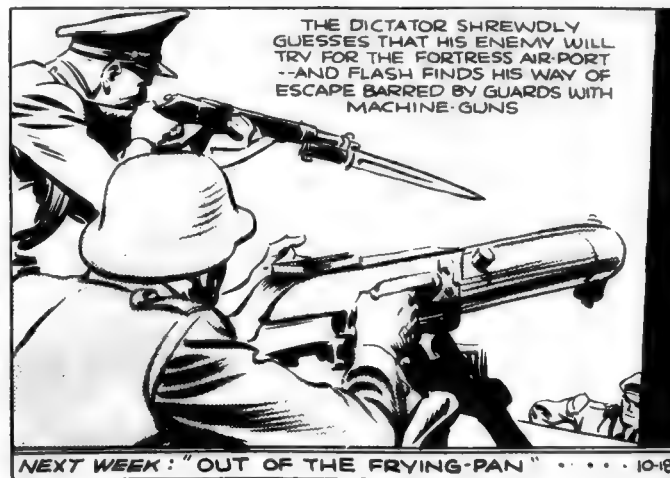
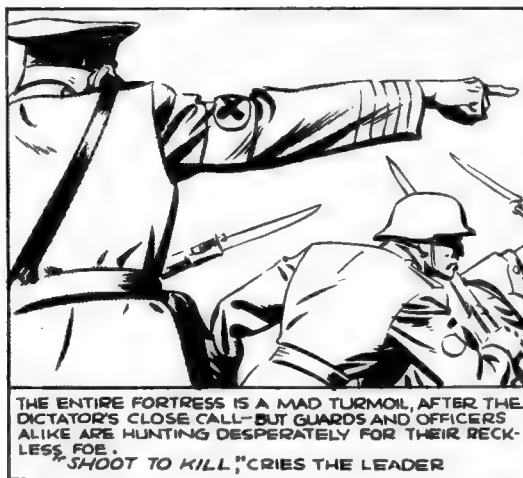
THEN FLASH CARRIES ON WITH HIS DARING PROGRAM OF ESCAPE, BY BLASTING THE EXIT DOORWAY INTO A FLAMING RUIN WITH HIS RAY-GUN.



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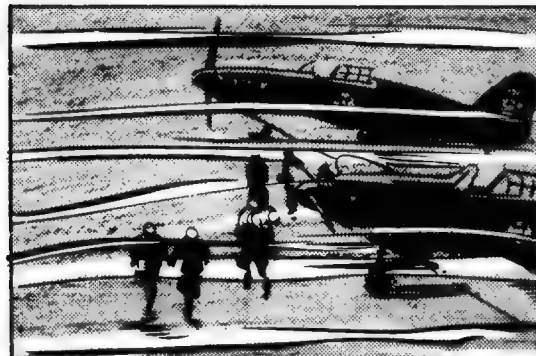
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NEXT WEEK: "OUT OF THE FRYING-PAN" 10-18

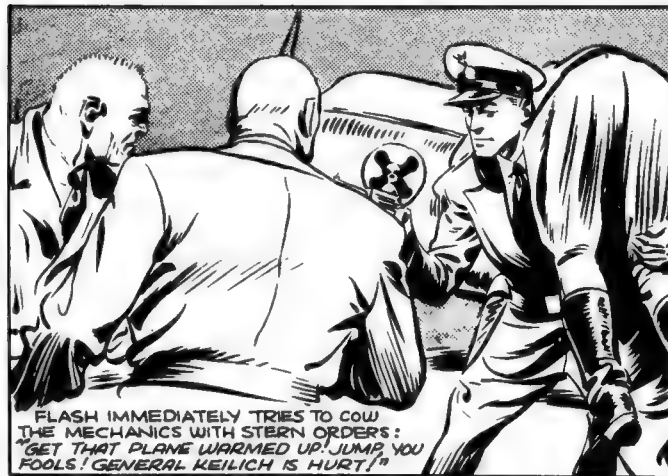






WHILE THE DICTATOR'S GUARDS FIRE AIMLESSLY AT EACH OTHER AND AT NOTHING, IN THE ARTIFICIAL FOG WITH WHICH FLASH HAS BLINDED THEM-HE LEADS HIS PARTY TOWARD THE AIRPLANE HANGAR. !!!

10-24



FLASH IMMEDIATELY TRIES TO COW THE MECHANICS WITH STERN ORDERS: "GET THAT PLANE WARMED UP. JUMP, YOU FOOLS! GENERAL KEILICH IS HURT!"



"YOU'RE A SPY--WE WERE WARNED BY 'PHONE--PUT UP YOUR HANDS!" CRIES ONE MECHANIC---BUT WHILE HE TALKS, FLASH'S RAY-CHARGE FINDS ITS MARK!

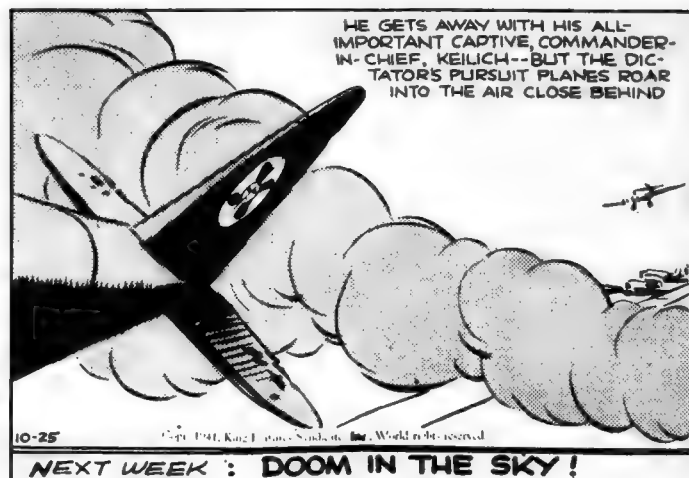
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FLASH DRIVES THE MECHANICS AWAY, WHILE DALE AND ZARKOV LOAD THEMSELVES AND THE UNCONSCIOUS KEILICH INTO THE DICTATOR'S PRIVATE PLANE



FLASH GUNS THE PLANE ALOFT-ONLY TO RUN INTO THE FIRE OF THE GUARDS GROPING OUT OF THE MAN-MADE FOG!



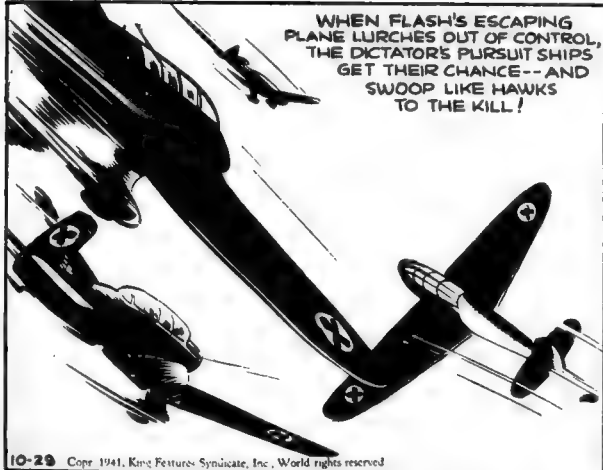
HE GETS AWAY WITH HIS ALL-IMPORTANT CAPTIVE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, KEILICH--BUT THE DICTATOR'S PURSUIT PLANES ROAR INTO THE AIR CLOSE BEHIND

10-25

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NEXT WEEK: DOOM IN THE SKY!

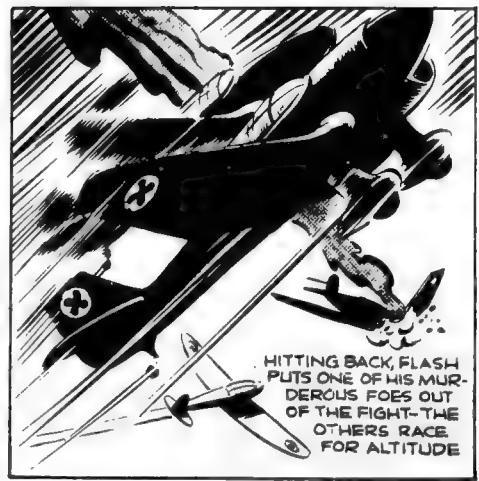




WHEN FLASH'S ESCAPING PLANE LURCHES OUT OF CONTROL, THE DICTATOR'S PURSUIT SHIPS GET THEIR CHANCE-- AND SWOOP LIKE HAWKS TO THE KILL!



MACHINE-GUN AND CANNON FIRE THREATEN FLASH WITH IMMEDIATE DESTRUCTION-- FIERCELY, HE FIGHTS TO SAVE DALE FROM DEATH IN THE SKY!



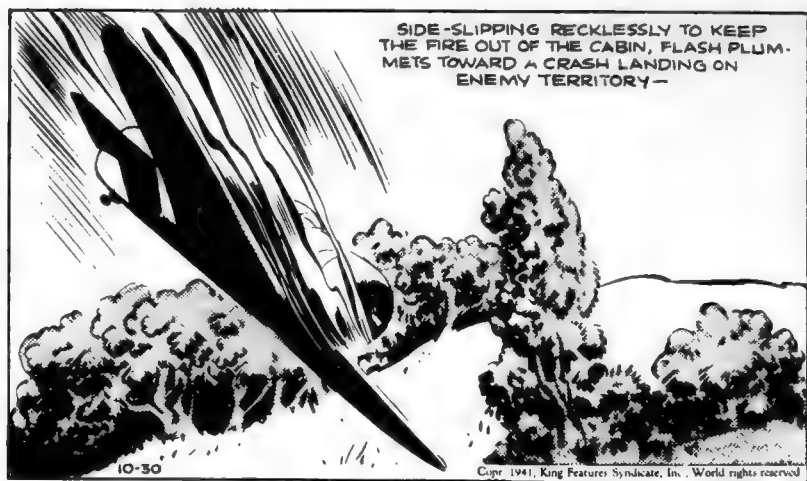
HITTING BACK, FLASH PUTS ONE OF HIS MURDEROUS FOES OUT OF THE FIGHT--THE OTHERS RACE FOR ALTITUDE



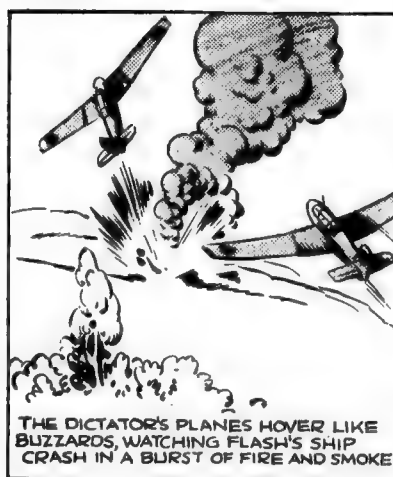
FLASH TRIES TO CLIMB AND MEET THE ENEMY PLANES ON EVEN TERMS, BUT HIS DAMAGED PLANE STARTS TO FALL, OUT OF CONTROL ~~~



DIVING LIKE FIENDS, THE DICTATOR'S PURSUIT PLANES AVENGE FLASH'S DARING RAID ON THEIR STRONGHOLD. SUDDENLY HIS PLANE BURSTS INTO FLAME -

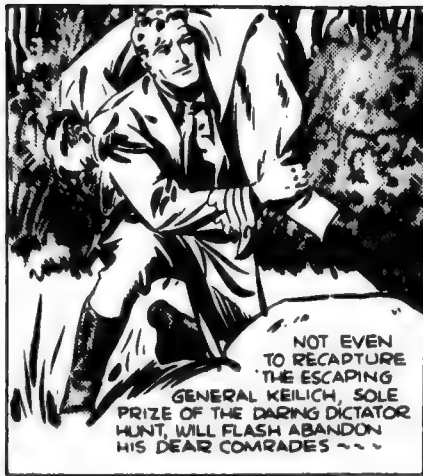


SIDE-SLIPPING RECKLESSLY TO KEEP THE FIRE OUT OF THE CABIN, FLASH PLUMMETS TOWARD A CRASH LANDING ON ENEMY TERRITORY--



FLASH VAINLY TRIES TO REVIVE DALE AND ZARKOV,
AFTER THEIR PLANE CRASHES IN FLAMES -

"DARLING, I'LL
NEVER FORGIVE
MYSELF IF
YOU-- IF YOU--
IF IT'S TOO
LATE!"



NOT EVEN
TO RECAPTURE
THE ESCAPING
GENERAL KEILICH, SOLE
PRIZE OF THE DARING DICTATOR
HUNT, WILL FLASH ABANDON
HIS DEAR COMRADES ~~~



FLASH'S DOUBLE BURDEN HARDLY
SLOWS HIM DOWN, AS HE RACES
AGAINST TIME - AND DEATH -
TOWARD HIS ROCKET-SHIP
AND THE LIFE-SAVING
RESOURCES OF MONGOS
MEDICAL SCIENCE -

WORN WITH WEARINESS~~AND
WITH DESPERATE CONCERN, FLASH
CARRIES THE UNCONSCIOUS
DALE AND ZARKOV TO HIS
HIDDEN ROCKET-SHIP

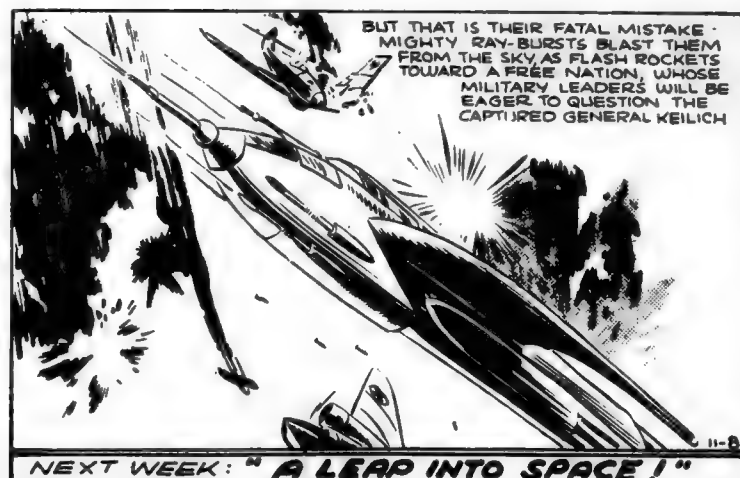
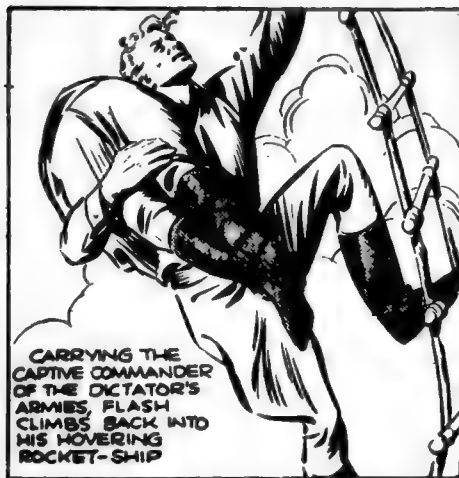
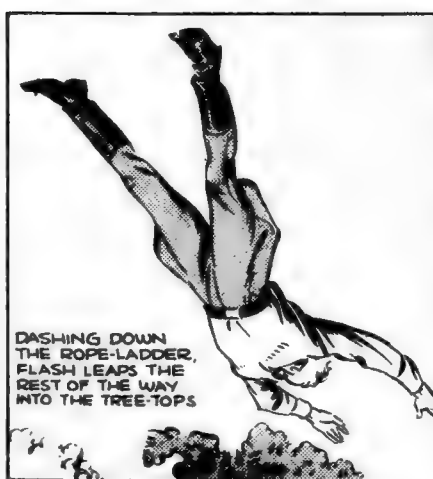
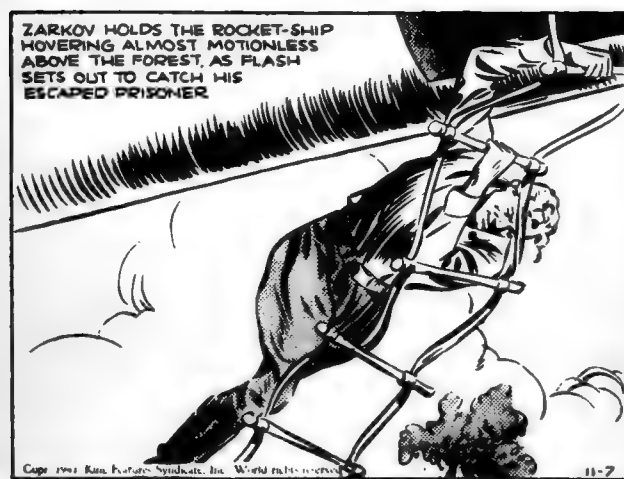


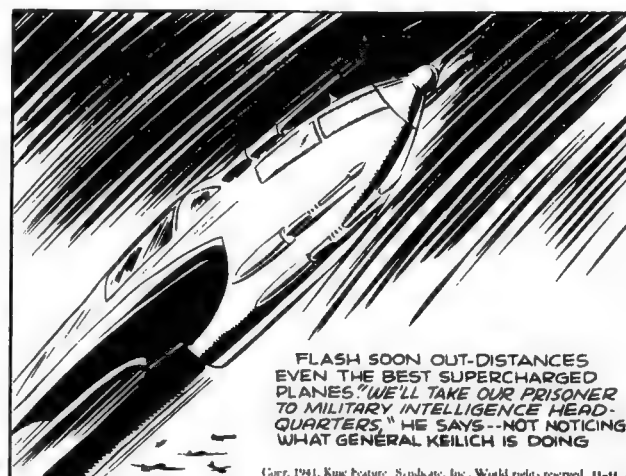
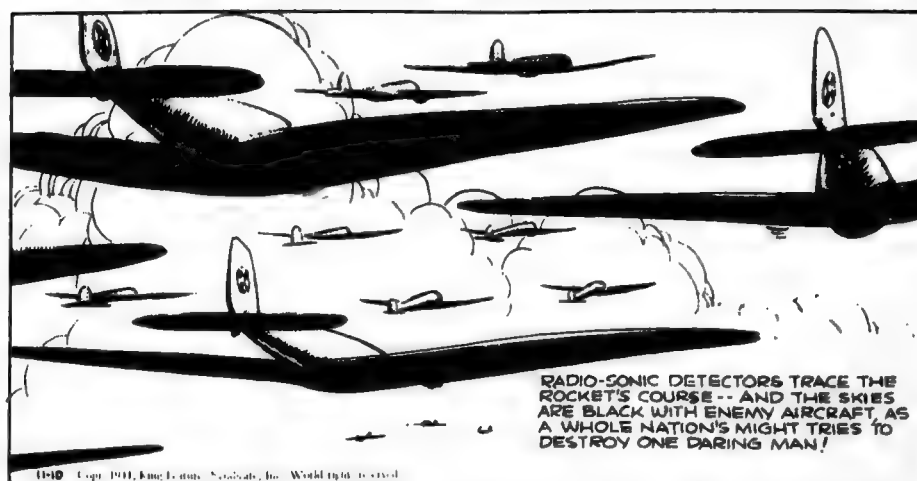
TENSELY, FLASH APPLIES THE SWIFTEST RESTORATIVES
OF MONGO'S MEDICAL SCIENCE - HE GASPS WITH
RELIEF AS DALE OPENS HER EYES TO MURMUR:
"OH, FLASH, DEAR, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?"



"YOU AND ZARKOV ARE THE
ONES YOU SHOULD WORRY
ABOUT, SWEET." FLASH
SAYS AS HE WORKS TO
RESTORE HIS OLD
COMRADE









STRUGGLING AGAINST HIS BONDS, GENERAL KEILICH EDGES TOWARD THE EMERGENCY DOOR OF THE ROCKET-SHIP



RATHER THAN RISK REVEALING HIS DICTATOR'S INVASION PLANS TO HIS CAPTORS, THE LOYAL GENERAL TRIES TO JUMP TO HIS DEATH!

11-12



FLASH SEES HIS PRIZE ESCAPING--HE GRABS KEILICH IN TIME, BUT THE GENERAL'S SUICIDAL STRUGGLES PULL FLASH THROUGH THE OPEN EXIT DOOR!

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TRYING TO KEEP THE ENEMY GENERAL FROM ESCAPING FLASH STRUGGLES TO PULL HIM BACK IN THE ROCKET-SHIP ---WITH DISASTROUS RESULTS!



THE DRAG OF THE OPEN EXIT-DOOR MAKES THE ROCKET LURCH--AND FLASH IS FLUNG INTO SPACE, WITHOUT A PARACHUTE!

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FALLING THROUGH THE SUB-STRATOSPHERE TOWARD CERTAIN DEATH ON THE DISTANT EARTH BELOW, FLASH INSTINCTIVELY HANGS ON TO HIS PRISONER-- BUT HIS ONLY THOUGHT IS A FAREWELL TO DALE ----



ZARKOV AND DALE ARE STUNNED WITH HORROR WHEN FLASH FALLS OUT OF THEIR ROCKET TOWARD A HORRIBLE DEATH ON THE EARTH FAR BELOW !!



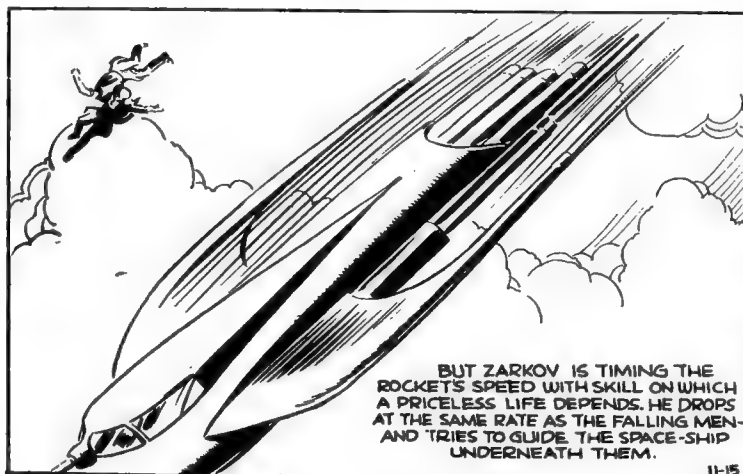
SUDDENLY ZARKOV HAS ONE WILD HOPE. "SHUT THAT DOOR." HE BARKS FIERCELY TO ROUSE DALE FROM HER DAZED GRIEF --- FOR SECONDS ARE PRICELESS NOW!



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AS THE ROCKET-SHIP PASSES THE FALLING BODIES OF FLASH AND KELICH, DALE TAKES A LAST TEAR-STAINED LOOK AT HER BELOVED, SOON TO CRASH TO PULP ON THE GROUND



BUT ZARKOV IS TIMING THE ROCKET'S SPEED WITH SKILL ON WHICH A PRICELESS LIFE DEPENDS. HE DROPS AT THE SAME RATE AS THE FALLING MEN AND TRIES TO GUIDE THE SPACE-SHIP UNDERNEATH THEM.



WITH THE MOST DELICATE MOVEMENT, ZARKOV SWINGS THE SHIP BELOW THE DOOMED PAIR. HE HEARS A DULL THUD ON THE ROOF—BUT HE CANNOT KNOW WHETHER FLASH IS SENSELESS FROM THE SHOCK—OR WHETHER HE CAN HANG ONTO THE DIVING ROCKET!

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NEXT WEEK: "STRANGE LANDING"

FALLING THROUGH SPACE, FLASH WAVES A LAST FAREWELL TO DALE IN THE ROCKET-SHIP DIVING ALONGSIDE HIM

BUT ZARKOV SWINGS THE ROCKET SQUARELY UNDERNEATH THE FALLING PAIR--AND FLASH DESPERATELY CLUTCHES AT A ROCKET-TUBE WITH NEW HOPE --



ZARKOV DELICATELY BALANCES THE ROCKET-SHIP, HOVERING IN MID-AIR, SO THE SLIP-STREAM OR MOMENTUM WON'T DISLODGE HIS ALL-IMPORTANT DECK CARGO--FLASH KICKS THE ROCKET-HULL IN MORSE CODE, "O.K."

EVEN AS HE TRIES TO FIGURE A WAY OF GETTING BACK INSIDE THE ROCKET, FLASH SMILES TO SEE HOW KEILICH, WHOSE SUICIDE ATTEMPT PLUNGED THEM INTO SPACE, NOW CLINGS TO THE RESCUE SHIP WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH



--BUT GENERAL KEILICH FINALLY OVERCOMES THE HORROR OF FALLING--ONCE MORE HE NERVES HIMSELF TO DIE, RATHER THAN BETRAY HIS DICTATOR'S WAR SECRETS--SALUTING, HE STARTS FOR THE SIDE OF THE ROCKET-SHIP.

BUT FLASH IS READY THIS TIME--HEEDLESS OF THE ROCKET'S CURVED AND SLIPPERY FOOTING, HE GRABS KEILICH--AND HALTS THE GENERAL'S ESCAPE





ZARKOV GIVES DALE THE ROCKET CONTROLS: "HOLD IT STEADY--I'LL TRY TO GET FLASH ON THE ROOF BEFORE HE FALLS AGAIN!"



11-19

CLIMBING UP THE SMOOTH SIDES OF THE ROCKET-SHIP, ZARKOV FINALLY IS HELPED TO THE TOP BY FLASH, WHO CAN ONLY SAY: "THANKS, OLD COMRADE--NOBODY BUT YOU COULD HAVE SAVED US!"



FASTENING THE ROPES AROUND A ROCKET-TUBE, FLASH GETS HIS CAPTIVE, KEILICH DOWN TO THE ROCKET'S DOORWAY

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NOW THAT FLASH IS FINALLY SAVED, DALE LETS GO AND, COLLAPSES "PLEASE DON'T CRY, MY DEAR." FLASH SAYS, MORE UPSET THAN BY HIS PLUNGE THROUGH SPACE ----



BUT THEY HAVE NO TIME FOR REUNION - A RISING BUZZ OF THE RADIO-SONIC DETECTOR WARNS OF THE APPROACHING ENEMY AIRCRAFT--THE DICTATOR'S PLANES ARE STILL GRIMLY ON THE TRAIL



FLASH FIRES A BARRAGE OF RAY-BLASTS THAT DOWN THE LEADING PURSUERS, AS ZARKOV ACCELERATES RAPIDLY TOWARD A THOUSAND-MILE-AN-HOUR SPEED ~~~~

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FLASH, WITH HIS PRISONER, KEILICH, ABOARD, GUIDES HIS ROCKET-SHIP TOWARD THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE DEFENDING ARMY.



FLASH LANDS JUST OUTSIDE THE MILITARY AREA, TO AVOID BEING ATTACKED BY MISTAKE. EVEN SO, AWESTRUCK BUT DETERMINED TROOPS AND VILLAGERS SURROUND THE UNKNOWN ROCKET-SHIP



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FLASH AND HIS PARTY ARE TAKEN UNDER GUARD, TO MILITARY INTELLIGENCE HEADQUARTERS

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BUT ALL DOUBTS ARE WIPED OUT, WHEN ONE OFFICER RECOGNIZES HIS ARCH-ENEMY, COMMANDER OF THE DICTATOR'S INVASION FORCES, GENERAL KEILICH! HE GASPS IN AMAZEMENT



"HOW DID YOU CAPTURE HIM?" THEY DEMAND OF FLASH, WHO REPLIES SWIFTLY: "THAT CAN WAIT--FIRST WE MUST QUESTION KEILICH AND LEARN THE DICTATOR'S WAR PLANS-- I KNOW HOW TO MAKE HIM TALK--!"

NEXT WEEK: "COUNTER-ATTACK!"



MILITARY ETIQUETTE IS ABANDONED, AS THE DEFENDING ARMY LEADERS QUIZ FLASH'S CAPTIVE, THE DICTATOR'S GENERAL, BUT KEILICH SNEERS AT THEIR QUESTIONS....



BUT FLASH HAD FORSEEN KEILICH'S STUBBORNNESS--HE UNCOCKS A BOTTLE HE HAS BROUGHT FROM THE ROCKET-SHIP AND GAS FILLS THE ROOM--
"NOW QUESTION HIM, GENTLEMEN," FLASH SAYS QUIETLY!



THE FUMES OF VERITAS--"TRUTH GAS"--OVERPOWER KEILICH'S IRON WILL. SWIFTLY HE CONFESSES THE FULL INVASION PLANS OF THE AGGRESSOR'S MIGHTY WAR-MACHINE...

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UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF FLASH'S TRUTH-GAS, GENERAL KEILICH REVEALS THE DICTATOR'S INVASION SCHEDULE.

AS THE FUMES WEAR OFF, HE REALIZES WHAT HE HAS DONE AND GOES BERSERK....



BEFORE THE MADDENED GENERAL CAN SHOOT THE MEN WHO HAVE STOLEN HIS SECRETS, FLASH LEAPS INTO ACTION

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IN HIS FRENZY, KEILICH SHOOTS AGAIN AND AGAIN--AND ONE WILD BULLET FINDS HIS OWN TORTURED BRAIN--FLASH SAYS SOFTLY: "HIS LOYALTY WAS MISPLACED, BUT HE WAS A BRAVE SOLDIER"



A DESPERATE COUNCIL OF WAR MEETS TO OPPOSE THE DICTATOR'S INVASION PLANS, WHICH FLASH HAS EXPOSED. "THEIR SECRET ARMAMENT IS TERRIFIC," SAYS THE COMMANDER. "WE FRANKLY KNOW WE STAND AL- MOST NO CHANCE, BUT WE'LL FIGHT TO THE END."



THEY AGREE ON A SUICIDAL COUNTER-ATTACK, AS THEIR ONE FORLORN HOPE OF PARALYZING THE INVASION BEFORE IT GETS FULLY STARTED. THE AIR-MARSHAL TELLS FLASH: "WE HAVE YOU, TO THANK FOR GIVING US THIS LAST CRACK AT THEM."



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FLASH TELLS DALE THAT HE IS JOINING THE DEFENDERS' SUICIDE SQUADRON TO ATTACK THE INVADING FORCE - "OH, DON'T GO, DEAR--THINK OF ME FOR ONCE!" DALE PLEADS, WOMAN-LIKE...



BUT SOON HER COURAGE COMES TO HER AID "OF COURSE, YOU MUST DO WHAT YOU CAN TO SAVE US ALL," SHE SAYS. "I ONLY ASK ONE THING--TAKE ME WITH YOU!"



FLASH REFUSES AGAIN AND AGAIN... BUT AT LAST EVEN HE IS NO MATCH FOR A WOMAN IN LOVE----

A TRIM AND SUSPICIOUSLY FEMININE-LOOKING YOUNG "OFFICER" IS AT FLASH'S SIDE, AS HE INSPECTS HIS ROCKET FOR THE COMING BATTLE

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FLASH ARGUES WITH HIS FRIEND, THE AIR-MARSHAL. "YOU KNOW THIS COUNTER-ATTACK IS HOPELESS, WITH YOUR SMALL FORCES, BUT IF YOU'LL GIVE ME ONE PURSUIT SQUADRON, I HAVE A SCHEME THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY WORK...."



"THIS IS CRAZY, BUT SO WAS YOUR RAID ON THE DICTATOR'S FORTRESS," THE MARSHAL SAYS, "ALL RIGHT, YOU'RE IN COMMAND OF THIS SQUADRON—GOOD-LUCK!"

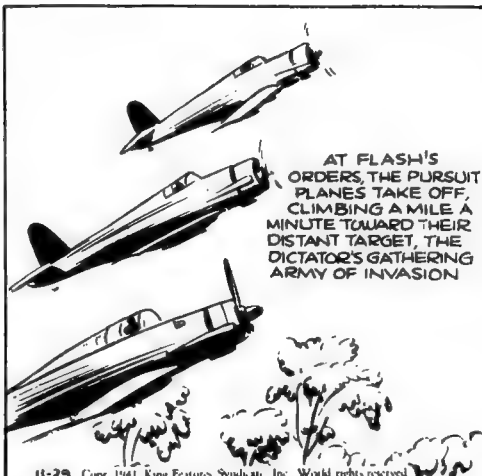


THE ZERO HOUR FOR THE ATTACK IS NEAR. FLASH WORKS AGAINST TIME AS HE RATIONS OUT RADIUM POWER-TUBES TO THE PUZZLED MEN OF HIS NEW COMMAND. "MOUNT THESE IN PLACE OF ONE MACHINE-GUN—AND FOLLOW MY ORDERS EXACTLY!"

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ALL IS READY FOR THE TAKE-OFF OF FLASH'S SUICIDE SQUADRON. ZARKOV DEMANDS TO GO ALONG, BUT FLASH RETORTS "DON'T BE SO GREEDY FOR EXCITEMENT, OLD FRIEND, YOU'RE NEEDED HERE, BUILDING ROCKETS AND GUNS!"



AT FLASH'S ORDERS, THE PURSUIT PLANES TAKE OFF, CLIMBING A MILE A MINUTE TOWARD THEIR DISTANT TARGET, THE DICTATOR'S GATHERING ARMY OF INVASION

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AT LAST, WITH A DEAFENING ROAR, FLASH'S ROCKET ZOOMS UP PAST THE PLANES, AS IF THEY WERE STANDING STILL—WITH DALE AT HIS SIDE, HE CUTS DOWN TO ONE-TENTH POWER AND LEADS HIS MAKESHIFT AIR FORCE, TO DO OR DIE.

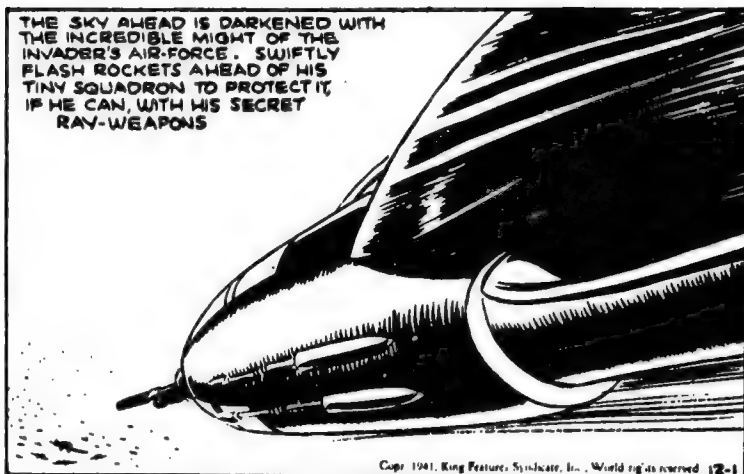
NEXT WEEK: "A SECRET WEAPON!"



"IF WE DON'T COME BACK FROM THIS DESPERATE ATTACK, FLASH, AT LEAST I WANT TO KISS YOU ONCE BEFORE... IT HAPPENS." DALE SAYS SOFTLY. FLASH BLAMES HIMSELF: "I SHOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN-IN TO YOUR INSISTING ON COMING ALONG."



THE RADIO-SONIC DETECTOR BUZZES SHARPLY. "ENEMY AIR-CRAFT AHEAD" FLASH SNAPS, "WE'RE APPROACHING THE DICTATOR'S INVASION BASE"



THE SKY AHEAD IS DARKENED WITH THE INCREDIBLE MIGHT OF THE INVADER'S AIR-FORCE. SWIFTLY FLASH ROCKETS AHEAD OF HIS TINY SQUADRON TO PROTECT IT, IF HE CAN, WITH HIS SECRET RAY-WEAPONS

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"HERE GOES FOR THE FINAL TEST, DALE! WISH ME LUCK," FLASH SAYS-AND TURNS ON HIS FORWARD RAY-BEAMS AT THE WIDEST POSSIBLE ANGLE, TO SWEEP THE ADVANCING ENEMY AIR-FLEETS !!



PANIC SEIZES THE DICTATOR'S SUPPOSEDLY INVINCIBLE AIR-FORCE, AS WHOLE SQUADRONS BURST INTO FLAME, THEIR MOTORS, BOMBS AND AMMUNITION SET AFIRE BY FLASH'S DETONATOR-RAY BEAMS.

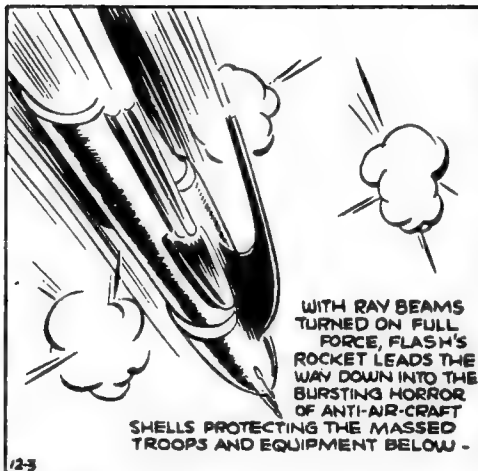
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"THEY'RE RUNNING, FLASH- WE'VE WON THE FIRST BATTLE!" BUT FLASH KNOWS BETTER THAN DALE THAT THE ENEMY AIR-FORCE IS HARDLY SCRATCHED BY HIS ATTACK.



LEADING HIS SMALL SQUADRON OVER THE ENEMY'S CENTRAL INVASION BASE, FLASH RADIOS THE QUIET ORDERS THAT MAY CHANGE THE DESTINY OF MANY LANDS: "SET YOUR RAY-TUBES AT C-T-H AND FOLLOW ME!"



WITH RAY BEAMS TURNED ON FULL FORCE, FLASH'S ROCKET LEADS THE WAY DOWN INTO THE BURSTING HORROR OF ANTI-AIR-CRAFT

SHELLS PROTECTING THE MASSES OF TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT BELOW -

12-3



DESPITE THE FEARFUL COST TO THEMSELVES, FLASH'S SUICIDE SQUADRON NEVER FALTERS, AS IT SWOOPS DOWN--- EXPLODING AMMUNITION DUMPS AND ENEMY WEAPONS BY THE THOUSANDS WITH ITS DETONATOR-RAYS

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LEAVING THE DICTATOR'S ARMY BASE A MASS OF FLAMES AND EXPLOSIONS, FLASH LEADS HIS SQUADRON IN AN ATTACK ON THE INVASION PORTS "ADJUST YOUR RAY-TUBES TO 9-Q-25," HE ORDERS, "AND FOLLOW ME, ONE AT A TIME!"



"THAT'S TERRIBLY RISKY," DALE GASPS. FLASH NODS: "YES, THE METAL-DISSOLVING RAYS' RANGE IS ALMOST UNLIMITED AND WE'RE LIKELY TO HIT EACH OTHER, BUT IT'S OUR ONE HOPE SMASHING THE INVASION!"

12-4

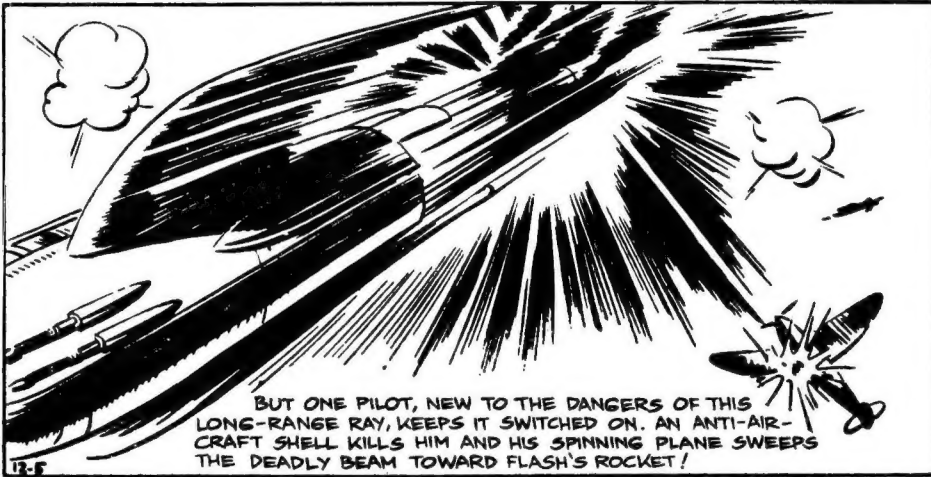


TRUE TO THE CAPTURED GENERAL'S CONFESSION, FLASH FINDS A VAST ARMADA OF METAL INVASION BARGES HIDDEN ALONG THE SHORE. HE SETS THE PACE FOR HIS SQUADRON BY DIVING ALONG THE SHORE, HIS "NEUTRIZER" RAY MELTING A SWATH ACROSS THE ENEMY SHIPS

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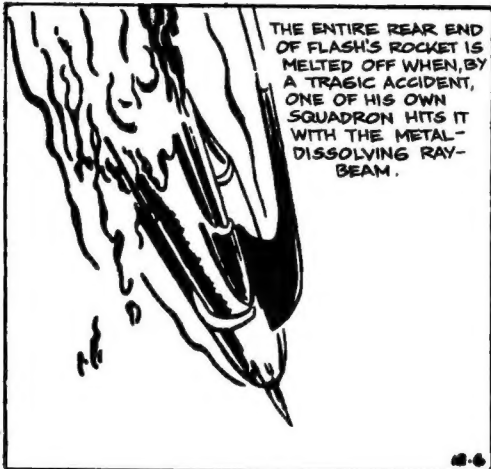


THE GALLANT SURVIVORS OF FLASH'S "SUICIDE SQUADRON" FOLLOW HIS LEAD, DIVING ONE BY ONE ALONG THE SHORE TO SINK THE INVASION FLEET WITH THE MELTAL-MELTING NEUTRIZER-RAYS.



BUT ONE PILOT, NEW TO THE DANGERS OF THIS LONG-RANGE RAY, KEEPS IT SWITCHED ON. AN ANTI-AIRCRAFT SHELL KILLS HIM AND HIS SPINNING PLANE SWEEPS THE DEADLY BEAM TOWARD FLASH'S ROCKET!

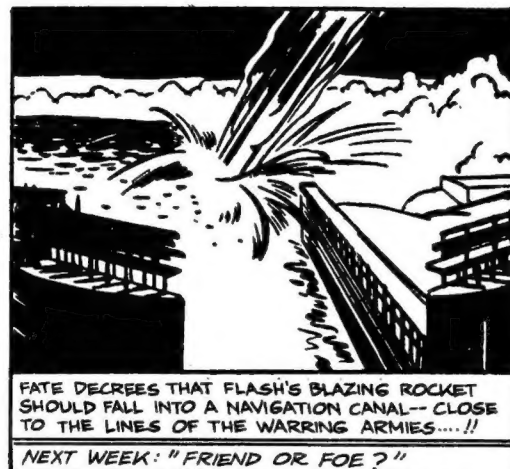
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THE ENTIRE REAR END OF FLASH'S ROCKET IS MELTED OFF WHEN, BY A TRAGIC ACCIDENT, ONE OF HIS OWN SQUADRON HITS IT WITH THE METAL-DISSOLVING RAY-BEAM.

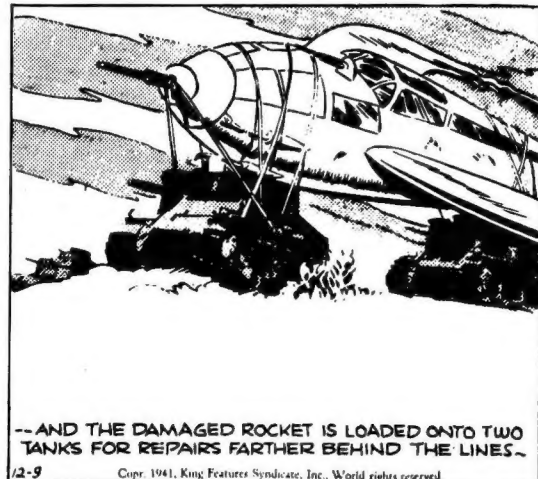
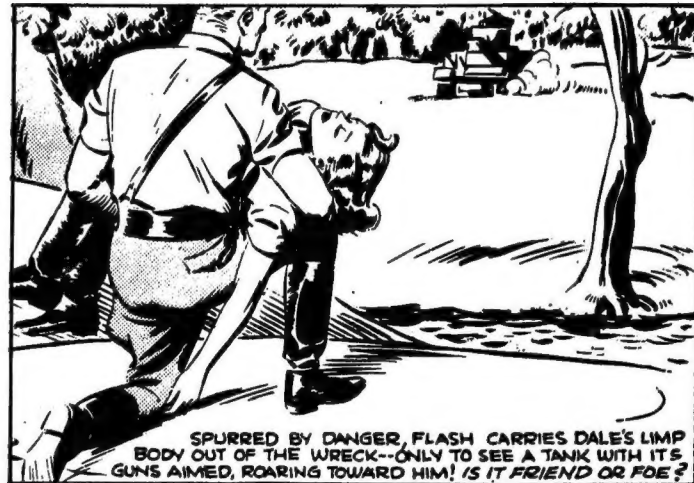
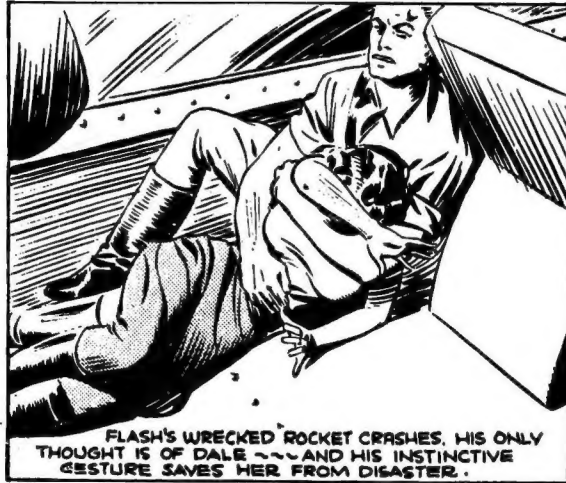


NOT EVEN FLASH'S SUPER-HUMAN STRENGTH AND SKILL CAN SAVE THE HALF-MELTED, DOOMED ROCKET.

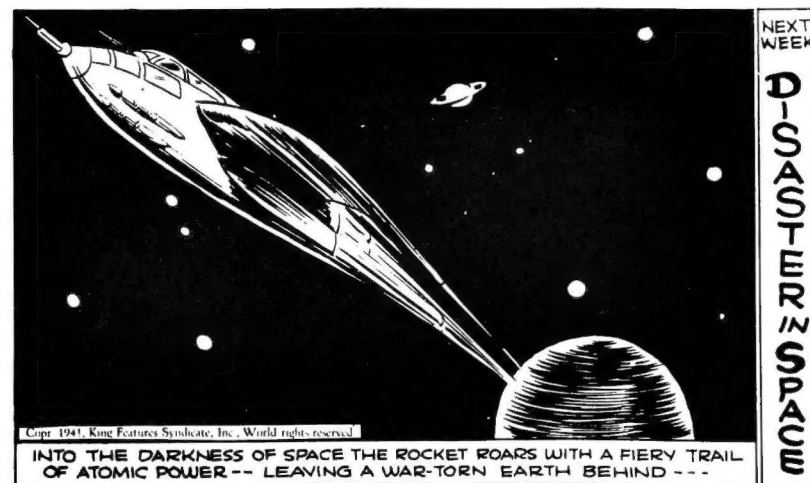
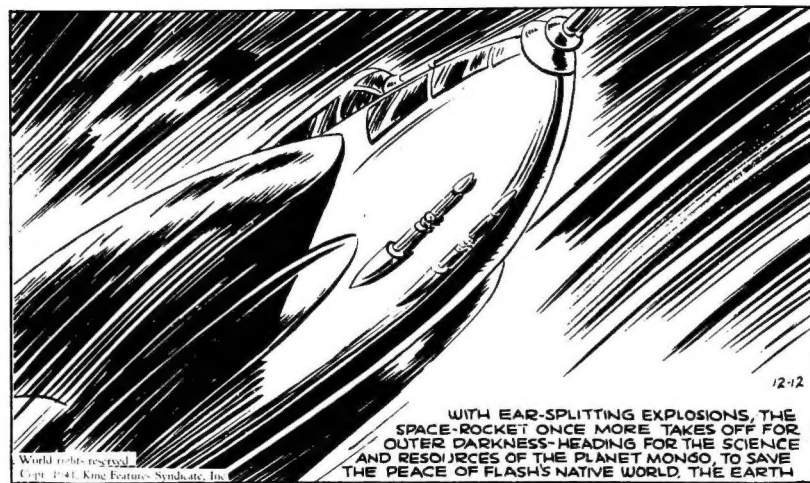


FATE DECREES THAT FLASH'S BLAZING ROCKET SHOULD FALL INTO A NAVIGATION CANAL—CLOSE TO THE LINES OF THE WARRING ARMIES....!!

NEXT WEEK: "FRIEND OR FOE?"







NEXT WEEK

DISASTER IN SPACE